

# Eastern Region Edition

From Flaming Gorge to Navajo  
Mountain

April 2001

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# EMPLOYER Update



## Are You Paying Your Employees *the Right Wages?*

**T**he Department of Workforce Services (DWS) provides an annual report on wages paid by employers in Utah. The report for 2000 was released at the 3rd Annual Utah Employer Conference held on January 11th at the E Center in West Valley City.

"The wage data is very popular with employers," reports Jeri Uresk, employment counselor at the Roosevelt DWS Office. "Employers want to know what the entry level and median wages are for new and current positions."

The wage survey includes wage data from over 2600 firms that was collected over a nine month period (October 1999 through July of 2000). The wage data is categorized into five regions:

- Salt Lake-Ogden metropolitan area,

- Provo-Orem metropolitan area,
- Box Elder and Cache counties,
- Iron and Washington counties
- Balance of state (rural counties)

The report shows an entry level, average, median, and middle-range rate for each occupation surveyed.

Shown below are some of the data from the annual wage report. It shows the entry level and median wage for 11 selected occupations in three of the Utah regions.

Generally, the data suggest that wages in rural Utah counties are not as high as those on the Wasatch Front.

The full report was provided to all attendees at the Employer Conference on a CD Rom disc. It can also be accessed at: [wi.dws.state.ut.us](http://wi.dws.state.ut.us).

	Utah Rural Counties		Provo-Orem Metropolitan Area		Salt Lake-Ogden Metropolitan Area	
	Entry Level	Median Wage	Entry Level	Median Wage	Entry Level	Median Wage
Accounting Clerk	\$7.00	\$9.50	\$7.60	\$10.00	\$8.10	\$10.50
Cashier	\$5.70	\$6.50	\$5.80	\$ 7.00	\$5.90	\$ 7.30
Computer Support Specialist	\$11.30	\$13.10	\$9.20	\$10.20	\$10.00	\$12.50
Construction Laborer	\$7.70	\$10.20	\$7.60	\$9.30	\$8.40	\$10.20
Diesel Mechanic	\$9.30	\$12.00	\$11.20	\$13.30	NA	NA
General Maintenance Worker	\$7.50	\$10.90	\$8.00	\$10.40	\$8.40	\$11.30
Licensed Practical Nurse	\$8.40	\$10.00	\$9.00	\$11.00	\$10.20	\$11.40
Network Administrator	\$13.10	\$16.90	\$12.90	\$17.00	\$13.40	\$16.20
Operating Engineer	\$10.50	\$11.80	\$11.20	\$12.90	\$10.60	\$12.80
Truck Driver (Heavy)	\$9.30	\$11.90	\$10.90	\$13.30	\$10.50	\$11.50
Welder	\$9.00	\$11.20	\$8.50	\$10.90	\$9.30	\$11.60

## earned income credit

### Did you know...

that the Earned Income Credit (EIC) brings federal dollars back into local economies? The EIC is a special tax benefit for working people who earn low or moderate incomes. As an employer, you may have both employees and customers who could be eligible for this valuable tax benefit. Publicizing the EIC can increase your company's visibility in the community. The EIC supplements employees' wages at no cost to you. The EIC helps eligible workers pay bills and keep their jobs which in turn produces more stable employees.

Please tell your workers and/or customers about the Advance EIC payment option. Eligible workers can receive payment throughout the year instead of in a lump sum at tax time. Employers can also help by making W-5 forms available for convenience.

For more information on the EIC, contact the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities at (202) 408-1080 or the IRS at (800) 829-1040.

## it's only a myth...

### Myth #7:

Workforce Services doesn't help new business owners.

### Reality:

A variety of publications are available to new business owners just by calling the local centers. "Doing Business In Utah" is a popular guide including business information about state and federal requirements, selecting business structure, preparing business plans, as well as identifying ways to finance business. Inquirers can also receive resource information about phone numbers and persons to contact regarding new accounts, audits, contributions, etc. If you would like a copy, please call Bob Andra at (801) 526-9443.

# Bosses Listen Up!

Robert Johnson of Fort Worth, Texas, has been looking for the past several months for something that's as scarce as a good five-cent cigar: a meaningful, permanent part-time job.

The problem isn't that Johnson lacks skills. He's a former aerospace engineer with a law degree who practiced law for 20 years, then trained as a certified software technician. Rather, he laments, "in everything I have expertise in ... employers want somebody full time." In other cases, he adds, the part-time opportunities aren't challenging.

After a 15-year trend toward workplace flexibility, most big employers now offer setups aimed at allowing people to jam more roles and responsibilities into their day. But the idea of allowing people simply to cut back to a good, permanent part-time job has been a nonstarter at most companies.

Plenty of low-paying part-time jobs can be found in call centers, retailing and other service businesses, of course. Also, through gritty determination,

some workers, mostly women, have carved out good part-time roles.

Some companies allow parents to return part-time for awhile after parental leave. And professionals at

*Fifty-eight percent of baby boomers want to work part time into their retirement.*

some law, consulting and accounting firms have staked out part-time status without falling off the partner track.

Nevertheless, many workers long for part-time status. The Families and Work Institute say a full 33 percent of women and 28 percent of men would prefer to work part time if they could afford it. Other surveys found that given a choice between more time or more money, 40 percent to 60 percent of Americans would take the time.

Demographics are fueling that wish; AARP says 58 percent of baby boomers want to work part time into their retirement.

Many who ask to reduce their hours meet strong resistance. When a corporate strategist for a New Jersey financial-services firm asked to switch to the part-time status offered in his employer's written policies, the response from a manager was, "You've got to be kidding!" the strategist says. He was so stunned he dropped the idea. He has since left the company.

From employers' standpoint, most of the costs of part-timers are manageable. Part-timers tend to pay a larger share of health insurance, while life insurance, pensions and payroll taxes tend to cost their employers less.

Part-timers, however, often need full-time office space. A bigger hurdle is inconvenience. Managing more bodies can be complex. And work hours in many jobs are so open-ended that it can be hard to figure out a part-timer's pay.

Condensed from an article in The Wall Street Journal, Feb. 21 2001 "Employees Are Seeking Fewer Hours; Maybe Bosses Should Listen" by Sue Shellenbarger

## Who Wants to Be a Wage Expert?

### *Understanding and Using Wage Information*

Actually, you don't need to be an expert at all. You just need to know where to find the most recent information on wages, which is just a click away on our website at:

<http://wi.dws.state.ut.us/pubs/uow/wagepub2001.htm>. Here you will find the Utah Occupational Wages 2001, a helpful tool that will show you what wages are being paid for which occupations in which areas. Find answers to questions such as: What are the highest paying occupations? The lowest paying? What you're paying your employees can affect your business. Here are a few excerpts:

#### **Question:** Who uses wage information?

**Answer:** Wage information is essential to employers, employees, and everyone who participates in the labor market.

- Employers use the data to determine whether they are paying their workers a competitive wage, to develop job descriptions and classification plans, to recruit workers, and to identify locations where new business operations may be successful.

- Job seekers, students, and others use wage data to make decisions

about jobs or careers, to negotiate job offers or promotions, to make relocation decisions, and to decide which education or training programs to pursue.

**There is no single "right" wage for an occupation.** The economy and the supply and demand of the job market determine the wage an employer is willing and able to pay an employee. The individual employee decides whether or not to accept the wage offered for the job he or she is hired to perform.

**Question:** We are worried about losing employees to competitors. How can we assure we're paying wages slightly above average?

**Answer:** To find the answer to this question, see the discussion of the middle 50 percent (beginning on page 9 of the publication on our website). You might also look at the average wages paid for the occupation in your area and average wages paid for other occupations your employees might be qualified to perform (i.e., you could lose a receptionist who finds a higher paying job working as a cashier).

#### **Related Information Resources**

A wide range of economic and labor market information is available via our website, <http://wi.dws.state.ut.us>. Click on the "Economic Information" button to find the projected job outlook for Utah and sub-state areas, regional economic forecasts, and cost-of-living information.

You'll also find:

- Hot links to all 50 state homepages
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics
- The Governor's Office of Planning & Budget

At the national level, the Department of Labor has several websites for employers, job seekers, and others interested in the labor market.

- America's Talent Bank at [www.atb.org](http://www.atb.org)
- America's Job Bank at [www.ajb.dni.us](http://www.ajb.dni.us)
- America's Career InfoNet at [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org)

### **Employers share positive experiences with DWS:**

Dear Mr. [Ken] Jensen:

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your assistance and cooperation in our effort to gather information for our forthcoming Poverty Report.

Utah Issues is committed to providing all segments of society the necessary information to make a realistic assessment of the state of poverty in Utah, and we would not have been able to do so without your assistance.

**Bill Crim**

*Executive Director, Utah Issues*

To Tom Woodland:

Thank you for all of your support and help with our staffing efforts this last year. I could not have done it without you! I will contact you again in the spring when we begin hiring again. Again, thank you for your ongoing support. I appreciate you and your organization as a staffing partner."

*Watkins Motor Lines, Inc.*

To Tara Connolly & Amy Lowe:

On behalf of West Jordan High School, we would like to thank you for your continued support of our students. We have received many favorable comments about your presentations from our staff and students. We realize it took a great deal of your time but we feel it was a great service to our students."

*West Jordan High School*

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## Eastern Region.....

### *Utah Wage Data Available on Website and CD*

The annual survey of wages in Utah has been completed and published by DWS. Approximately 2,600 employers provided wage information in late 1999 and the first half of 2000. The wage data is categorized into five regions based on geographical location of the employer. The five regions are Salt Lake-Ogden, Provo-Orem, Cache County, Cedar City-St. George and the rural counties. A statewide average is also provided for each occupation. Examples of occupations and wages are provided on the front page of this newsletter. Please contact your local employment center if you have questions or would like to learn more. The entire wage survey is on our website at: <http://wi.dws.state.ut.us>.



*Contact us if we can be of assistance:*

Blanding	678-1400
Castle Dale	381-4700
Moab	259-3700
Monticello	587-2016
Price	636-2300
Roosevelt	722-6500
Vernal	781-4100